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November 5, 2007

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Jonathan E. Fielding, M.D., M.P.H.  
Director and Health Officer

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON CULTURAL FOOD PREPARATION LAWS

On October 18, 2005, the Board of Supervisors approved a motion by Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich directing the Director of Public Health to convene meetings with restaurant groups representing various Asian cuisines. This is to provide an update on our progress since the July 11, 2007 status report.

**Training Workshops on Safe Handling of Traditionally Prepared Foods**

Status – Environmental Health's (EH) Consultation and Technical Services (CTS) unit conducted a second "Time Only as a Public Health Control" (TPHC) training workshop at the City of Monterey Park's City Hall on August 22, 2007 for members of the Chinese restaurant community. The workshop was coordinated as a result of the popular response to the initial workshop held on June 5, 2007. Bilingual trainers from EH conducted the training, which was also translated into Chinese text. The workshop taught attendees a safe, legal, and approved method to store traditionally prepared foods at room temperature. It was sponsored in partnership with the Los Angeles County Chinese Restaurants Health Standards Task Force (CRHSTF), Chinese Bar-B-Que Association, and the City of Monterey Park.

Prior to the workshop, a press conference to announce the training session was held on August 15, 2007 with the participating partners. The workshop was again very well received and CTS is presently working with the CRHSTF to schedule an additional session for restaurateurs in the Chinatown area.

CTS also conducted a TPHC training workshop in Koreatown on October 25, 2007 for members of the Korean restaurant community. Bilingual trainers from EH conducted the training and interactive exercise, which was sponsored in partnership with the Korean Restaurant Association and Korean American Business Association. Response to the training session was very positive and CTS will work with both partners to coordinate a second session.

### **Process for Assessing Training Needs**

- Meetings were convened with representatives of the Chinese, Japanese, and Korean restaurant communities. The absence of professional trade associations representing the Filipino and Vietnamese restaurant communities prevented similar meetings for these restaurateurs.
- Needs assessment surveys were developed, translated, and distributed to members of the respective trade associations. Additionally, to assess the needs of restaurateurs neither affiliated nor represented by a trade association, several hundred surveys were mailed to restaurants that served these cuisines.
- Needs assessment surveys were reviewed and a determination was made that respondents were mainly concerned with having the ability to hold traditionally prepared cuisines at room temperature for extended periods of time.
  - The Japanese Restaurant Association chose to delay training opportunities and declined to submit completed surveys.
  - Only a limited number of surveys were received from Filipino and Vietnamese restaurateurs (7 Filipino, 2 Vietnamese), suggesting that the pursuit of training opportunities be postponed until such time that each food community expresses an active interest in the endeavor.

### **The Asian Traditional Food Act**

The passage of the Asian Traditional Food Act (Assembly Bill 2214) mandated that the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) conduct a study on health and sanitation standards in relation to traditional Asian foods. CDPH is required provide results of the study to the Legislature no later than January 1, 2008. Once results of the State study are released, Environmental Health will make the appropriate changes to enforcement activities and policies to assure consistency with study results.

Environmental Health will continue to work closely with stakeholders of the various Asian cuisines to adequately address training needs and to provide effective compliance solutions regarding traditionally prepared cultural foods.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please let me know.

JEF:hd  
PH:511:025(6)

c: Chief Executive Officer  
County Counsel  
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors